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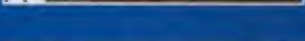
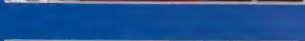
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CAN WE GET A HALLELUJAH?

Xbox launching October 3



Gamefreaks would like to thank Daniel Berry for providing these images - check out www.videogames.co.nz to see Daniel's first-rate coverage of the event

After months of speculation about price, release dates, titles and every other conceivable factor, Microsoft New Zealand has announced details of the launch of the Xbox.

The Xbox will go on sale here on October 3 at a recommended retail price of \$499 (matching the PlayStation 2) with games ranging between \$89 and \$129. The Xbox will feature around 80 launch titles, easily the most for the launch of a console in this country, with the number of available games expected to grow to around 150 before Christmas.

Microsoft faces a huge battle in New Zealand with Sony Computer Entertainment dominating the console market with more than 400,000 PlayStations sold and by the end of this year, the number of PlayStation 2 consoles is expected to exceed the 100,000 mark.

Microsoft have remained tight-lipped on the reasons for the delay but it's well-known that they have an impeccable record and a strong relationship with local retailers and in the interests of preserving this, they are being careful to get things right.

Microsoft is nothing if not committed to the future of gaming. This has been evident since their PC titles started to sell well back in the late 90s. In 1999, five of the top ten selling PC titles were Microsoft games and more recently, the software giant committed two billion US dollars to developing the online potential of the Xbox.

"Games just look best and play best on Xbox," says Marketing Manager Wilf Robinson who is leading the Xbox team in New Zealand. "It's the future-generation video game system and delivers the most powerful game play experience ever."

"The market here is very sophisticated and it's no secret Kiwi gamers have been hanging out for Xbox," Robinson says. "All our intelligence tells us the New Zealand launch of Xbox is going to be an outstanding success."

Here at the Gamefreaks offices, we're as delighted as anyone that the Xbox has arrived and we've spent a lot of time over the last month "researching" a number of excellent first and third party Xbox titles.

Be sure and catch our extensive coverage of this long-awaited launch in next month's issue where we will take a closer look at all the capabilities of the Xbox as well as some of the top games that will be available from day one.



... AND WHAT'S THEIR NAME?



OziSoft New Zealand will be known as Infogrames New Zealand in future, now that Infogrames has increased its share in ownership of OziSoft in NZ and Australia to 100 per cent. Infogrames publishes many leading games including Driver 2, Stuntman, Neverwinter Nights, V-Rally 3, Civilization 3 and Grand Prix 4. The company also holds the interactive rights to high-profile licences such as Superman, The Matrix, Terminator, Tonka, Monopoly, Blues Clues, Dragonball Z and Looney Tunes. Infogrames Australia will continue to represent and distribute partners including Codemasters, Eidos Interactive, Konami, Virgin Interactive and SCI.

GRAND THEFT AUTO VICE CITY

PLATFORM: PLAYSTATION 2 ■ PUBLISHER: TAKE 2 INTERACTIVE ■ RELEASE: OCTOBER 25



From the decade of big hair, excess and pastel suits comes a story of one man's rise to the top of the criminal heap.

Athletes, pop stars, real estate developers, politicians, trailer trash, everyone is moving to Vice City to find out what makes it the fastest growing city in the United States. It is an elaborate setting with locations ranging from beach to swamp and from glam to ghetto. Making it the most diverse, extensive and vibrant digital city ever.

Take-Two Interactive Software, Incorporated's publishing division, Rockstar Games' Grand Theft Auto: Vice City is the most ambitious piece of interactive entertainment yet created, and it is just another slice of the GTA "universe". Coming out for Sony's PlayStation 2 in October it is expected to be an extremely hot release.

Combining non-linear game play with a character driven narrative, you arrive in a town full of delights and decadence are given the opportunity to take it over however you would like; since it seems there are many out to have you dead, the best thing to do is take over.

Tommy Vercetti, your character, actually speaks. There will be around 8000 individual voice-overs including 20 top Hollywood stars filling out the cast. In the heart of the gateway to South America and the Caribbean, Vice City is teaming with diverse characters; there is a friend for everyone, even an ex-con trying to stay two-steps ahead of the law.

But, as Tommy quickly finds out, trust is still a commodity far rarer and more valuable than platinum.

After a long stretch in a maximum security prison, he is sent to Vice City by his old boss, Sonny Forelli. All does not go exactly as planned upon his arrival in the glamorous, hedonistic metropolis in the South. Having been set up, Tommy is left with no money and no merchandise. Bikers, Cuban gangsters, and corrupt politicians threaten his very existence.

The vehicle count is 120 (70 more than GTA3), many inspired by sports cars from the 1980s. There is something for every predilection; high-performance autos, motorbikes (!) and power boats.

The boating action has been spruced up with an all new physics system. There is even a golf buggy (mini-golf drive-by?). If you are feeling even more free-spirited view the city from above in a chartered helicopter.

Nine hours of music featuring more than 90 songs licensed from well known artists can be found by flipping through the FM dial of the local radio. It will be mind blowing. Ears will be seduced by sultry melodies and pumping beats, driving rock and crucial electro, sweet soul and romantic anthems. So far confirmed songs include Judas Priest's "You've Got Another Thing Coming", Grand Master Flash's "The Message", Laura Branigan's "Self Control", Kool and the Gang's "Summer Madness", Flock of Seagulls' "I Ran", Hall & Oats' "Out of Touch" and Cutting Crew's "I Just Died in Your Arms".

All of Vice City will be accessible to players from the get-go, taking the action whenever and wherever the mood takes things. The action is both in and out of doors, with multilevel interior environments to be explored.

The available arsenal has 40 weapons, among them, new hand to hand weapons like the machete, and new manoeuvres like crouching help with combat play. The camera can now be locked in an over-the-shoulder view to make fighting easier. The targeting system makes finding and shooting of the enemy more successful by highlighting them based on priority and not proximity, it also shows the bullet spray radius. This crosshair system changes colour to show the seriousness of the enemies' threat. It is also now possible to shoot out tires wreaking havoc on vehicles.

The missions will be more involved with a variety of objectives. They will require combination of vehicle, indoor and outdoor skills to achieve successful completion. There are even side missions, including pizza delivery. Watch out for the plethora of pedestrians crowding the sidewalks and traffic congesting the streets; some citizens cause more trouble than others.

Crank it up, this is no sequel or add-on, Grand Theft Auto Vice City is inline to create an empire all its own. And from what information the developers are willing to divulge, it sounds like this is going to be one *#@% of a good time.

"The work currently being done is going to surpass the efforts of last year, as we set our sights on making an even more revolutionary gaming experience."
Sam Houser, president of Rockstar Games

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PlayStation 2



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LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS

PLATFORM: PLAYSTATION 2 / GAME BOY ADVANCE ■ PUBLISHER: EA GAMES ■ RELEASE: NOVEMBER



Following the success of Peter Jackson's epic retelling of Lord of the Rings, it was only a matter of time before we started seeing game titles inspired by the movie.

After visiting local EA offices to take a look at some early code, we're as happy as a dozen drunken Hobbits to inform you that the upcoming 3D adventure based on the events of the first film is looking wicked.

US software publishing giant Electronic Arts are understandably very excited as well and it's clear they have gone to great lengths in bringing to life the many memorable action sequences from the movie.

The first of Jackson's three films focuses on the forming of friendships and bonds within the fellowship and in the game, players will feel very much a part of a team.

Player's will chose from Frodo, Aragorn, Gandalf the Grey and co, each of them with assorted strengths and weaknesses. The landmarks of Middle earth are included - the rolling hills of the sleepy Shire, the Elvish city of Rivendale, Sauron's Tower at Issangardd and beyond to Mordor.

STUNTMAN

PLATFORM: PLAYSTATION 2 ■ PUBLISHER: INFOGRAMES ■ RELEASE: SEPTEMBER

Back in the day, stunts ruled the action movie world, and cars crashes were king. Before digital effects softened up the scene you knew you were seeing real danger, real thrills and real people doing the dumbest stuff - slick, professional, big budget dumb stuff!

Stuntman, from the same crew that brought us Driver, is a sweet execution of the stunt movie concept. This is no button-down racer, the driving has to be precise and if you can't hit the marks in time to the director's cues the shot is a washout. The car physics and damage modelling are on the money and by the time you've nailed a few moves a real feel for the game develops.

Everything comes at you pretty quick, gameplay is consistent and the required driving sequences are well thought out. Getting the lines right and making a clean run is immensely rewarding, and the cinematic replays are very cool.

It's nice to see a new storyline, and the polish is there. While initially frustrating the game delivers - do try this at home!



ETERNAL DARKNESS: SANITY'S REQUIEM

PLATFORM: GAMECUBE ■ PUBLISHER: NINTENDO ■ RELEASE: SEPTEMBER



For gamers who love the dark side of interactive entertainment, the PlayStation and PlayStation 2 has up until recently, been their only refuge.

But as we head into a new era in console gaming, things are changing every day and now we understand that Nintendo's GameCube is the exclusive home of Capcom's Resident Evil franchise.

Another "interactive horror" title on the way for Cube fans is Eternal Darkness: Sanity's Requiem. It's from Silicon Knights, creators of the thinly disguised bloodbath that was Legacy of Kain on the original PlayStation.

We've already had a peek at the NTSC version of Eternal Darkness and despite the apparent gloom of the gorgeous 3D environments the game is a lot of fun.

So like a character from Scooby Doo, expect to be scared and often by this wonderfully snaking plot.

The fascinating lineup of characters have all been well conceived and even though Eternal Darkness cannot match the breathtaking visuals of Resident Evil -- also available on the GameCube -- it provides a wonderfully dark atmosphere as well as some of the finest voice acting ever heard in a game.

Separate branching storylines will allow you to play again and again - Cube fans should definitely keep an eye out for Eternal Darkness when it releases here next month.

RATCHET AND CLANK

PLATFORM:PLAYSTATION 2 ■ PUBLISHER:SCE ■ RELEASE: NOVEMBER



Ratchet and Clank was one of the more eye-catching SCE titles at this year's E3 and we won't have long to wait before this highly promising platformer.

Ratchet is a talented mechanic, stuck on a remote world but he has always longed to escape and explore the big bad universe. His life is changed forever when he befriends an android, who goes by the name of Clank, who crash lands on Ratchet's home planet.

Ratchet and Clank team up to do battle with the evil Chairman Drek, who is planning on replacing his heavily polluted home world with a new planet, made up of all the best parts of other planets.

Set in the distant future in a far away galaxy, Ratchet and Clank will be one of the biggest PS2 titles when it hits later this year. The gameplay is varied and non-linear - so when you reach each new objective (a new planet for example) you will be given a set of objectives, but you don't have to complete them all to move on to the next place.



ODDWORLD MUNCH'S ODDYSEE

PLATFORM:XBOX ■ PUBLISHER:MICROSOFT ■ RELEASE: OCTOBER

Munch's Oddysee is the sequel to Abe's Exodus. Don't mistake this as just another game in the Abe series - this is different, very different. The first factor which makes this a great game is that it is on the Xbox and takes full advantage of the Xbox's capability in terms of its powerful graphics and sound.

The game is simply a 3D platformer with a new character to control called Munch. Munch is the last remaining Gabbit on Oddworld. Your goal is to steal the last can of Gabbier back to keep the Gabbies from going extinct.

The graphics are amazing whether it be in game or FMV. Characters are very detailed. Bump mapping is supported so the water effects appear almost real.

Playing as Abe and Munch you can command your Mudoken friends by pressing the lettered face buttons.

The character voices are awesome - Munch's and Abe's voices are always amusing, you can even squeeze out a fart with Abe, which tends to get everyone giggling.

Highly innovative with variety in its gameplay, we're looking forward to seeing all the different endings.



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GAME BOY ADVANCE TM

NEED FOR SPEED: HOT PURSUIT 2

PLATFORM: PLAYSTATION 2 ■ PUBLISHER: EA GAMES ■ DEVELOPER: EA GAMES ■ PRICE: \$129.95 ■ RELEASE: SEPTEMBER 20



EA always include the hottest cars in this series, and this latest version lets the player choose from over 20 licensed "dream machines" from the world's leading manufacturers including Ferrari, Lamborghini and Porsche

After some pretty workaday sequels the Need for Speed franchise is back, and rest assured Hot Pursuit 2 is no retread. We've lost count of the number of actual titles in the NFS series but Need For Speed Hot Pursuit 2 is a clear break with some serious work evident in the graphics and physics. The speed freaks down at EA have pulled a real ripper out of the PS2 and look to set a new standard for driving excitement across all the major platforms.

If you're new to the franchise it won't take you long to feel the difference. Unlike Gran Turismo and some of the more stoic driving simulators, the Need for Speed series has focused less on realism and more on velocity, excitement and fun.

EA always include the latest cars in the Need for Speed series, and this latest version lets the player choose from over 20 licensed babe magnets from the world's leading manufacturers including the

Ferrari 360 Spider, Lamborghini Murcielago and Porsche Carrera GT. Once you're behind the wheel you will not want to stop.

Taking your styling from the best the world has to offer is a smart move and this game really pumps the eye candy, the cars ooze sex appeal and the environments do justice with incredible detail in the reflections and textures. Drivers will encounter river crossings, waterfalls and even bush fires. You will be exposed to all the elements and there are some fairly extreme weather conditions, including tornadoes, snowstorms, downpours and even hurricanes.

Not just good looking, NFS:HP2 brings back what we've been missing since the original Hot Pursuit and more, with Quick Races and Challenges for basic racing, and two progressive modes for unlocking stuff, Championship and Hot Pursuit. Hot Pursuit 2 adopts the now familiar

reward system that EA seem to incorporate into most of their games. Players are rewarded, in this case with extra tracks, luxury vehicles and so on, for progressing through the various missions in these two modes.

The plentiful missions are based on branching trees of 60 racing challenges with rewards attached to each. You can follow many different paths through both challenge trees, so if you happen to be hot for a particular track or prize car, you can make a beeline in that direction to get it as soon as possible.

There are only three tracks and five cars available as the game opens, but Hot Pursuit 2 features over 20 superbly crafted tracks, each with up to 12 miles of road and environments ranging from the picturesque forests to the long, sandy beaches. New for this release is support for Bandit style off-road action that will be essential for keeping Smokey off your tail, opening up route options and short cuts



It's not about where you are going or where you've been - it's about the beauty of the ride



Need For Speed Hot Pursuit 2 has some of the best tracks we've seen - they're long, beautiful and cleverly designed to provide enough speed and challenges for even the most experienced PS2 racing fan



aplenty.

As with the original Hot Pursuit, there are a number of options in multiplayer action - the PlayStation 2, Xbox and Nintendo GameCube versions will also feature a multiplayer mode with two-player split screen racing. The PC game will support up to eight-player multiplayer racing via LAN/Internet/Direct IP.

The previous Hot Pursuit title, which appeared on the original PlayStation, was definitely one of the more thrilling racing experiences, with its lengthy, beautifully designed courses and the opportunity to either catch crooks or avoid cops, depending on your frame of mind. As a 2-player driving experience, only the great Gran Turismo could better it.

This new version delivers an even more intense, arcade racing experience and for the first time ever, it's on a next-generation game system. The result is that Need for Speed Hot Pursuit 2 looks better than ever and this highly promising PS2 racer could be one of the top racers we see this year.



Need For Speed Hot Pursuit 2 (on the PS2) is easily the best looking game we've seen from this series so far

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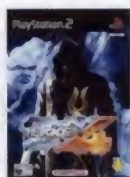
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TEKKEN 4

PLATFORM: PLAYSTATION 2 ■ PUBLISHER: SCEI ■ DEVELOPER: NAMCO ■ PRICE: \$12.95 ■ RELEASE: SEPTEMBER 20



A more subtle, sophisticated approach is needed in Tekken 4 - a good match is a real test of character mastery and can be very tense. You need both eyes on the action to pick up what's going on, and ideally you'll be reacting to the moves before you've had time to think about it. Pay attention or get paid out!

The Tekken series defined a new era when it launched with the original PSX and has always kept pace with each successive evolution. Tekken 4 is more than just a fresh coat of pixels on the genre and is a big step up in exploiting the power of the PS2.

The core of gameplay is runs both wide and deep, offering easy entry for the novice and is likely to stretch veterans. For the masher you can get results with a few basic dodge and strike moves, but even the fastest flurry of random button pressing won't make much long-term impact on the aggressively adaptive comp AI or a skilled human opponent. It's easy to put one over on the comp in the first round, but winning 2 out of 3 is a definite challenge against even average quality opponents in story mode.

As always in the Tekken world, sweet timing is essential

in putting together and launching combo attacks, and mixing up the styles will keep you clear of counter attacks. Get too predictable and you will be punished, overreach and you'll be vulnerable to a big combo comeback. More than ever pacing attacks and working the arena pays big dividends in an evenly matched encounter. In the more restricted arenas bouncing opponents off the walls stuns them, and you can interact with the background objects. The environment is fully realised 3D and movement backwards, forwards and around your opponent is a key part of securing a victory. In the 'Fight Club' style basement even the crowd is a factor, floating in front of the action at times and obscuring the moves.

The character graphics are attractive and functional. The body movement in both striking and dodging is another advance

on what's gone before and clearly displays who's taking the fight to whom, and how.

In typical Tekken fashion each character style is individual and it's important to play to them. You'd be hard pressed to match legs with Christie for example - this title's Eddie - but keep it close with the fists and you'll be in good shape, for a while!

Throw in some technical stuff like 50/60Hz option for the PAL version and support for high definition television, along with more than twenty characters and all the usual battle modes and you've got the perfect party piece to show off your system. Tekken 4 will be keeping us hitting continue for a good while yet!

As this concept art shows, there are plenty of alternatives to a straight power play with a good range of characters showing sinuous movement to dodge, duck and dive



SUPER MARIO SUNSHINE

PLATFORM: GAMECUBE ■ PUBLISHER: NINTENDO ■ DEVELOPER: NINTENDO ■ PRICE: \$129.95 ■ RELEASE: OCTOBER 4



It seems outlandish that Nintendo's GameCube was released without Mario, who let his brother hog all the limelight at launch time with Luigi's Mansion.

Cube owners won't have long to wait now before the 'petite' plumber makes a welcome return.

Shigeru Miyamoto's Super Mario Sunshine made a bit of a splash at this year's E3 and this month, Kiwi Cube fans will be able to see what all the fuss was about.

The first thing that strikes you when playing Super Mario Sunshine is that it just looks so good – the GameCube is a deceptively powerful and the game features some eye-catching effects.

As in past Mario titles, the game is set in a huge and highly colourful 3D environment.

There's a familiar eco-friendly vibe throughout the plot which sees Mario and Princess Peach trying to take a relaxing holiday on a gorgeous tropical island. But a mysterious sludge-like substance is polluting the delicate eco system and even affecting the life giving rays of the sun.

Mario himself is framed for the crime and must not only eliminate the contamination



No Nintendo system can be complete without a Mario title and Super Mario Sunshine won't disappoint - this is as good as it gets for fans of platform gaming

but also find the real culprit and clear his name.

Super Mario Sunshine's gameplay consists mainly of puzzle solving and platform action that sees Mario leaping about like a teenage Russian gymnast on a sugar rush. He still does his patented double and triple jumps and butt-attacks but Mario has learned a lot of new tricks since his days on the N64 - he now leaps from wall to wall, Jackie Chan styles, to climb up on the rooftops.

Mario has incredible physicality for a stout wee plumber - he can run, walk, crawl, jump, climb, beg, roll over - you name, he'll do it enthusiastically.

Mario also wields a powerful water cannon to assist him in the big clean up - it looks suspiciously like the customised vacuum cleaner his brother

wore in that spooky mansion but has many more uses.

Here at Gamefreaks, we have huge respect for Nintendo, who were busy creating video games back when Sony just made radios and Bill Gates was still in short shorts.

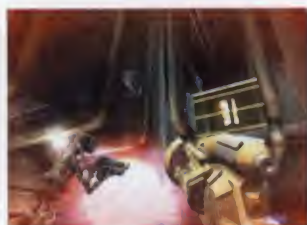
Super Mario Sunshine is a must own title for Cube owners and with some very strong first and third party games on the way things are looking sunny for Nintendo fans.

Super Mario Sunshine sold 350,000 copies in its first ten days of release in the US - Nintendo were quick to point out that it took Halo and Grand Theft Auto 3 a month to sell as many.



TIMESPLITTERS 2

PLATFORM:PLAYSTATION 2 ■ PUBLISHER:INFOGRADES ■ DEVELOPER: FREE RADICAL ■ PRICE: \$129.95 ■ RELEASE: OCTOBER 14



TimeSplitters are alien creatures who have the ability to manipulate time and space to change past events.

Humans have been reduced to a race of slaves but a method is discovered that will heal the time rift.

Alas the brainy extraterrestrials steal the crystals that are crucial to the operation so a marine must follow them through different time periods to recover said crystals and save the human race.

The original TimeSplitters was praised for its extremely fast gameplay and visual style. Free Radical design was behind the N64 classic Goldeneye so they know what they're doing and TimeSplitters 2 easily looks like the best first person shooter available on the PS2.

TimeSplitters 2 provides a deeper, more involving story mode and co-operative play. It presents multiple objectives very similar to that of Goldeneye, while the levels are much larger and much more tactically challenging.

The sound is great too and provides quite a bit of atmosphere when playing.

The controls are basically the same as the last time, which means they have been purpose built for an analog controller



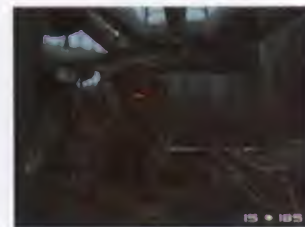
Pit yourself against your posse off 31 mates but it means you'll need several TVs and several PS2's. Like its predecessor, TimeSplitters 2 looks like a fantastic shooter in single and multiplayer mode

and are quite easy to master. It is quite easy get to grips with and by the time you do you will have picked up some nice weaponry. There are plenty of new weapons to choose from, the weapon effects, balance and animation received meticulous attention by the developers.

The AI of enemies has been significantly improved, previously the enemies took a gung-ho approach. This time round enemies will attack without hesitation and others will use stealth or cover to gun you down.

The original TimeSplitters introduced some funky characters to the first person genre; the sequel brings in such characters such as cowboys, sheriffs, monkeys, rock men and the Japanese schoolgirl attracting the most attention. In the original you could only create multiplayer maps but now you can set up Story levels and even have the option to set up guards patrol routes.

This time round, the i-link cable will serve as a huge multiplayer mode if you can round up a few TVs.



F1 2002

PLATFORM: XBOX ■ PUBLISHER: EA GAMES ■ PRICE: \$129.95 ■ RELEASE: OCT 3



Though the majority of our Xbox coverage begins next month, EA have already sent us several of their top franchise titles and we were understandably curious to see how some of these cross-platform games played and looked on the Xbox.

Graphically, the fast paced action of Formula One is a perfect test for any games engine, especially with several cars on track and so far the Xbox appears to handle everything effortlessly.

Travelling at speeds up to and above 300 kph, raindrops splash then settle and appear to slide off your screen or visor. The new and improved weather effects and overall graphics are extraordinary.

The best new feature is the more interactive pit stops - players now have the option of pitting in to address problems as they wish, rather than being bound to an AI pit crew's rigidity.

So if you're leading by a nanosecond at Monaco with a lap to go, the pit crew won't say "I don't like the look of those clouds, better pit and change your tires."

These cars can be fragile and damage is a factor - repeated crashes will see your car looking more like a wreck at the speedway than a million dollar dream machine.

Formula One titles are obviously not for everyone - they tend to be very demanding, which scares off a lot of casual gamers but more games are not just about fun, they're about challenging yourself, and pushing the limits.

If you're still scared, check out the good range of newbie options.

For fans of Formula One and F1 gaming, this is as good as it gets on the console - for better looking graphics, you may have to turn to the PC version.

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FERRARI F355 CHALLENGE

PLATFORM: PLAYSTATION 2 ■ PUBLISHER: SCEI ■ DEVELOPER: SEGA ■ PRICE: \$119.95 ■ RELEASE: SEPTEMBER 27



Something a bit different for PS2 race fans this month, a true simulator in every sense of the word, Ferrari F355 Challenge will test even the most skilled drivers

This game began its life as a coin-op, was then ported over to the Dreamcast and now it's available for the PlayStation 2 complete with stacks of new features.

Because the two consoles have distinctly different capabilities, a lot of work has gone into redesigning the architecture of the game's engine and the results are impressive.

Other new features include improved views and camera angles, enhanced replay options, and a new Driver Challenge Mode, where you are assessed depending on how well you do during the race, with points obtained for good driving skills and racing methods.

Also built-in is cool Gallery Mode which holds some dramatic still images and movies from Ferrari's archives - you can unlock these by finishing the various sections of the game.

Heading the team in charge of redesigning the game for PS2, Yu Suzuki apparently enjoyed the challenge of adapting his game for a console where top driving games are customary.

"What I felt during PlayStation development was that a racing game on PS2 would be an extremely competitive genre. If we are going to release in such conditions, we have to make our game stand out from the rest. I believe we have achieved that objective in Ferrari F355 Challenge as the exclusive PS2 features added to the original concept make Ferrari a unique experience."

Ferrari F355 Challenge is a true simulator with ultra realistic handling physics but regrettably this is the closest most of us will get to driving a Ferrari.



NBA LIVE 2002

PLATFORM: XBOX ■ PUBLISHER: EA GAMES ■ DEVELOPER: EA SPORTS ■ PRICE: \$129.95 ■ RELEASE: OCTOBER 3



Following the unparalleled success of the Tall Blacks at the recent basketball world championships, we thought it only fitting to take a look at EA Sports' NBA Live 2002 on our brand new Xbox.

The best thing about this game is the dynamic camera angle from which the series takes its name. Players are very much part of the play, rather than viewing the on court action as a spectator would from the side.

NBA Live 2002 is all action from the second you step on the court. The game is actually very similar to the PS2 version with the most obvious difference being the sharper visuals, and player likenesses, that are eerily accurate down the tattoos on Alan Iverson's arm.

All the teams and players are here, including Michael Jordan whose playing for the lowly Washington Wizards but no sign of New Zealand's own NBA star Sean Marks in the high flying Miami Heat lineup.

The game includes all the usual modes of play - Exhibition, season, practice, one-on-one (down in 'da hood) but best of all is the franchise mode that was sadly overlooked in the PS2 version.

Scoring points is fairly easy, and even a neophyte will be able to rack up a decent tally before they even learn the controls.

With room for up to 4 players, NBA Live 2002 is always better with a few friends.



Fun and easy to play, EA Live 2002 looks better than ever on the Xbox!

TAZ WANTED

PLATFORM: PLAYSTATION 2 ■ PUBLISHER: OZISOFT ■ PRICE: \$89.95 ■ RELEASE: OCTOBER 25



The great days of Looney Tunes return as we take control of the always manic Tasmanian Devil. After escaping the evil clutches of Yosemite Sam, Taz is now wanted. Taz begins his adventure on a journey to save his love, She-devil.

Something which will take most gamers fancy is the cell shaded technology used for this game. Using such a technology in the game preserves the whole cartoon feel while giving a three dimensional aspect to gameplay. The environments contain plenty of detail proportioned under the golden Looney Tunes rule of 'Larger than Life'. The animation is very smooth, Taz moves like he does in the cartoons. He spins, destroys and eats absolutely everything in his path.

The action takes place in four huge Looney Tune worlds which contain authentic detail and challenging tasks. In each of the levels there are Taz disguises. These disguises allow Taz to look hilarious and help him to perform new moves. Hip Hop Taz will see him break out on the turntables!

Time limits are placed on reaching your goals which provide a very fast gameplay experience. Although it will take you a few goes to complete a level, it will be a satisfying feeling when you do.

The dynamic soundtrack adds to the action of the game by actually changing to suit the tempo of the gameplay. Expect cameos from firm favourites Tweety, Daffy Duck and Sylvester and relive the glorious world of Looney Tunes.



CONFLICT DESERT STORM

PS2 ■ INFOGRAMES

The timing of this title is ideal as George Junior gears up for an attack on Iraq. The premise here is simple – shoot everyone you see and then report back to base to load up on ammo and brag to the fellas.

There are a lot of missions, plenty of meat on the bones here. And although war is a mindless pursuit, the video game equivalent can be a hell of a lot of fun.



MADDEN 2003

PC ■ EA SPORTS

No season mode this time around from EA Sports, they decided to get rid of it because of the hugely popular franchise mode. The graphics engine in Madden 2003 is the same as 2002's but it's easier to tell players faces apart.

There are a bunch more player animations for catches, tackles, and breaking tackles. With the upgraded franchise, Madden 2003 will be a favourite till the next Madden is released.



GORE

PC ■ TAKE 2 INTERACTIVE

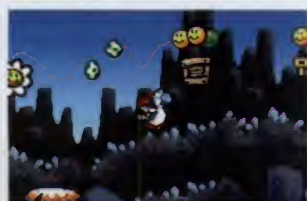
Though not as gruesome as you'd imagine, Gore still packs a punch.

The game's engine is good, particularly if you're interested more in speed than aesthetics, which makes it perfect for average to lower end PCs.

Gore plays smooth and fast – probably as fast as the original Quake, but the impressive selection of weaponry is a great deal more deadly.

YOSHI'S ISLAND: SUPER MARIO ADVANCE 3

PLATFORM: GAME BOY ADVANCE ■ PUBLISHER: NINTENDO ■ DEVELOPER: NINTENDO ■ PRICE: \$99.95 ■ RELEASE: OCTOBER 4



The diversity of the games that are appearing on the Game Boy Advance these days are testimony to the growing popularity of Nintendo's handheld. It's certainly not "just for the kids" as some of the more ignorant commentators have observed.

It's been a good long while since I was a kid and my GBA has saved me many times - whilst waiting to go into business meetings or standing in a queue, or at boring family outings - it comes in especially handy whilst using public transport.

Yoshi's Island: Super Mario Advance 3 is the latest of the SNES classics to make the leap forward in time to the GBA and as usual, the conversion is flawless.

Yoshi's Island was one of the last 2D side scrolling platformers ever seen on the SNES, around ten years ago – it's set in the pastel coloured world, where the teensy Mario rides atop the baby dinosaur known as Yoshi and together they must find his brother Luigi who is nowhere to be found.

Has anyone else noticed that these brothers tend to lose each other a lot? Haven't they heard of email or cell phones?

The gameplay is typical of that era, with accurate jumping from platform to platform very much the order of the day but Yoshi also has an endless supply of eggs that he hurls at bad guys with impunity.

This game first appeared on Nintendo's SNES console and at that time these graphics were pushing that system to the limit. If you're a fan of Nintendo's rich history or if you're a retro nut – this is essential for the collection.

WIN...

TEKKEN 4

SCE has kindly provided 5 copies of Tekken 4 to be won. It's really the best 3D fighting game on PS2! Answer the following to be in the draw to win.

"Which of the following is not a character from the Tekken series?"

- a) "Paul"
- b) "Bruce"
- c) "Cory"



FERRARI F355 CHALLENGE PACK

We have 5 Ferrari F355 Challenge Packs to be won - each comes with a copy of the game, a cap and a keyring. Answer the question below and you will go in the draw to win.

"Name the German Ferrari driver who won this year's Formula One Championship?"

- a) "Schumacher"
- b) "Frentzer"
- c) "Rommel"



YOSHI'S ISLAND (GBA)

Answer the following to be in the draw to win one of two copies of the latest word hit for the Game Boy Advance.



"Which of the following is not a Nintendo character?"

- a) "Wario"
- b) "Bowser"
- c) "Ozzy"

SUPER MARIO SUNSHINE

For Nintendo GameCube fans we have 2 copies of Super Mario Sunshine to be won. Answer the following questions to be in the draw.



"What is Mario's last name?"

- a) "Soprano"
- b) "Searesé"
- c) "He doesn't have one"

HOW TO ENTER

number and contact details on the back of the envelope, list the prize you're after and of course, you will need to include the correct answer. All correct entries immediately go into the draw to win. Send to:

Gamefreaks Competition
PO Box 68211
Newton
Auckland

All winners for this month's competitions will be notified before October 8, 2002

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PlayStation.2

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GIRLFRIEND

BOYFRIEND

GIRLFRIEND WINS



Life's a fight and you'd better win or else. Play to a crowd with your favourite characters in the famous Iron Fist Tournament. With interactive backgrounds and the odd special prop this is fighting for the fun of it. **namco**

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